

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Description of the Flag

The flag of the United States of America has 13 horizontal stripes – 7 red and 6 white – the red and white stripes alternate, and a union which consists of white stars of five points on a blue field placed in the upper quarter next to the staff and extending to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top. The number of stars is the same as the number of States in the union.

Effective July 4, 1960, the canton or union contains 50 stars arranged as indicated in the above reproduction. On the admission of a State into the Union a star will be added to the union of the Flag, and such addition will take effect on the 4th day of July next succeeding such admission.

Proper Manner of Displaying the Flag

There are certain fundamental rules of heraldry, which if understood generally, would indicate the proper method of displaying the Flag of the United States of America. The matter becomes a very simple one if it is kept in mind that the Flag represents the living country and is itself considered as a living thing. The union of the flag is the honor point; the right arm is the sword arm and therefore the point of danger and hence the place of honor.

The flag should be displayed only from sunrise to sunset, or between such hours as may be designated by proper authority. However, the Flag may be displayed at night upon special occasions when it is desired to produce a patriotic effect. It should be hoisted briskly, but should be lowered slowly and ceremoniously. The Flag should be displayed on all National and State holidays and on historic and special occasions. (However, being the emblem of our country, it ought to fly from every flagpole every day throughout the year, weather permitting.) Special care should be taken to see that the Flag is displayed on the following days:

- Inauguration day, January 20
- Lincoln's Birthday, February 12
- Washington's Birthday, February 22
- Easter Sunday (variable)
- Mother's Day, second Sunday in May
- Armed Forces Day, Third Saturday in May
- Memorial Day (half staff until noon), May 30
- Flag Day, June 14
- Independence Day, July 4
- Labor Day, first Monday in September
- Citizenship Day, September 17
- Columbus Day, October 12
- Veterans Day, November 11
- Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday of November
- Christmas Day, December 25
- Such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States
- Birthdays of States (dates of admission)
- State Holidays

The Flag should be displayed daily, weather permitting, on or near the main administration building of every public institution. The Flag should be displayed in or near every polling (voting) place on election days and, during school days, in or near every schoolhouse.

When carried in a procession with another flag or flags, the Flag of the United States of America should be either on the marching right, i.e., the flag's own right, or when there is a line of other flags, the Flag of the United States of America may be in front of the center of that line.

When displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, the Flag of the United States of America should be on the right, the Flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

When a number of flags of States or cities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from the staffs with the Flag of the United States of America, the latter should be at center or at the highest point of the group.

When flags of States or cities or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the Flag of the United States of America, the latter should always be at the peak. When flown from adjacent staffs the Flag of the United States of America should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant flown in the former position should be placed above, or in the latter position to the right of the Flag of the United States of America, i.e., to the observer's left except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the Flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

When flags of two or more nations are displayed they should be flown from separate staffs of the height and the flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in the time of peace.

When the Flag is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of building, the union of the Flag should go clear to the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff (half-mast). (When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope, extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the Flag should be hoisted out from the building towards the pole, union first.)

When the Flag is displayed otherwise than by being flown from a staff, it should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out, or so suspended that its folds fall as free as though the Flag were staffed. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the Flag's own right; that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the Flag should be displayed in the same way; that is, with the union, or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

When displayed over the middle of the street, the Flag should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

When used on a speaker's platform, the Flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, if it is displayed in the chancel of a church, or on the speaker's platform in a public auditorium, the flag should occupy the position of honor and be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the congregation or audience. Any other flag so displayed in the chancel or on the platform should be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's left as he faces the congregation or audience. But when the flag is

Updated July 2017

displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium elsewhere than in the chancel or on the platform it should be placed in the position of honor at the right of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform.

When used in connection with the unveiling of a stature or monument, the Flag should form a distinctive feature during the ceremony, but the Flag itself should never be used as the covering for the statue.

When flown at half-staff, the Flag should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position; but before lowering the Flag for the day it should be raised again to the peak. By half-staff is meant lowering down the Flag to on-half the distance between the top and the bottom of the staff. On Memorial Day, May 30th, the Flag is displayed at half-staff from sunrise until noon and at full staff from noon until sunset; for the Nation lives and the Flag is the symbol of the living Nation. Crepe is used on the flagstaff only by order of the President.

When used to cover a casket, the Flag should be placed so that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The Flag should not be lowered into the grave nor allowed to touch the ground. The casket should be carried foot first.

When the Flag is in such a condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should not be cast aside or used in any other way that might be viewed as disrespectful to the National colors, but should be destroyed as a whole privately, preferably by burning or by some other method in harmony with the reverence and respect we owe to the emblem representing our Country.

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the Flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Navy, and Air Force of the United States whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

Flag Display Cautions:

Do not permit disrespect to be shown to the Flag of the United States of America.

Do not dip the Flag of the United States of America to any person or any thing. The regimental/Group color, State flag, organizational or institutional flag will render this honor.

Do not display the Flag with the union down except as a signal of distress (SOS).

Do not place any other flag or pennant above or, if on the same level, to the right of the Flag of the United States of America.

Do not let the Flag touch the ground or the floor, or trail in the water.

Do not place any object or emblem of any kind on or above the Flag of the United States of America.

The Flag should never be used as drapery of any sort whatsoever, never festooned, be drawn neither back nor up or in folds, but always allowed to hang free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always

Updated July 2017

arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of a platform, and for decoration in general.

Do not fasten the Flag in such manner as will permit it to be easily torn.

Do not drape the Flag over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle, or of railway train or boat. When the Flag is displayed on a motor car, the staff should be affixed firmly to the chassis, or clamped to the radiator cap.

Do not display the Flag on a float in a parade except from a staff.

Do not use the Flag as a covering for a ceiling.

Do not display the Flag flat or horizontal, but always aloft and free.

Do not use the Flag as a portion of a costume or of an athletic uniform. Do not embroider it upon cushions or handkerchiefs nor print in on paper napkins or boxes.

Do not put lettering of any kind upon the Flag.

Do not use the Flag in any form of advertising nor fasten an advertising sign to a pole from which the Flag is flown.

Do not display, use or store the Flag in such a manner as will permit it to be easily soiled or damaged.

The Flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

Salute to the Flag

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the Flag, or when the Flag is passing in a parade or in a review, all persons present should face the Flag, stand at attention, and salute. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove the headdress (hat) with the right hand, holding it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Men without hats should salute in the same manner. Women should salute by placing the right hand over the heart. The salute to the Flag in the moving column should be rendered at moment the Flag passes.

Salute to the National Anthem

The "Star-Spangled Banner" is the National Anthem of the United States of America. It was made such by Act of Congress, March 3, 1931.

When the National Anthem is played and the Flag is not displayed, all present should stand and face toward the music. Those in uniform should salute at the first note of the Anthem, retaining this position until the last note. All others should stand at attention, men removing the headdress. When the Flag is displayed, all present should face the Flag and display the proper courtesy as noted above.

Pledge to the Flag

In pledging allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, the approved practice in schools, which is suitable also for civilians, is rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart. However, civilians will always show full respect to the Flag when the pledge is given by merely standing at attention and men removing their hats. *Persons in uniform should render the military salute when outdoors.*

The Pledge of Allegiance

**I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
And to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.**